

110,000 displaced in south Sudan

NAIROBI (R) — Sudanese rebels are struggling to hold back a major onslaught by government troops and warplanes which is driving at least 110,000 civilians towards the southern frontier with Uganda, aid workers said in Nairobi. "We are fighting them," rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) official Justin Nyach told Reuters. But he added: "We can do nothing about the attacks from the air ... I don't know if we have enough forces to hold them back (on the ground)." Relief sources said government forces moving south from their garrison in the southern capital Juba in a push to cut rebel supply lines from Uganda had forced SPLA fighters to fall back from their positions at Kit, near the Ugandan border. The offensive, which gained pace last week as the dry season set in, has caused panic among tens of thousands of refugees in camps south of Kit who are now trekking south towards Uganda. Some 41,000 people have already started fleeing the camp of Ame, where four people were killed in an attack by gunmen last week.

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Talal Al Hassan heads for Jakarta

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan said Sunday the presidency council of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) will discuss the situation in Bosnia among other main topics at a meeting to be held in Jakarta this week. Speaking to Jordan Television shortly before leaving for the meeting, Mr. Hassan said that the ministerial-level meeting would also discuss the situation in Somalia and the Middle East peace process. Other topics include South-South and North-South relations, the next NAM foreign ministers' meeting and a number of economic issues of concern to the movement. The minister said that he would speak about Jordan's role in the Middle East peace process and the Kingdom's efforts for peace.

3 French remain captive in Yemen

SANA (AP) — Three French tourists kidnapped by Yemeni tribesmen with grievances against the Sanaa government began a third week in captivity Sunday. The hostages have been identified as retired agriculture teachers Henri Heslot and his wife, and 42-year-old cardiologist Brigitte Fonzaire. They were abducted Jan. 23 on their way to San'a from the northern town of Saada in a six-car convoy of tourists. The kidnappers belong to the Abnoum tribe in the Bani Nauf region of the northern Haga province. The tribesmen are angry that a road being built in the area bypasses their region. Officials led by Interior Minister Yehya Al Mutawakil have been trying to negotiate the release of the hostages, an army brigade has ringed the kidnappers' hideout.

Turkish planes bomb rebel Kurds in Iraq

ISTANBUL (R) — Turkish air force planes and helicopters gunned down rebel Kurds along border areas in northern Iraq on Sunday, Anatolian news agency reported. Quoting the regional emergency governor's office, Anatolia said the planes and helicopters attacked two separate regions after large groups of armed separatist Kurds were spotted. It was the second major raid by Turkish air force planes on the guerrillas in two weeks. Last month more than 50 Turkish aircraft attacked a camp used by Kurdish guerrillas inside northern Iraq. Nine Iranians were killed in error when a Turkish missile landed in Iranian territory, Iran said. Anatolia said the raids on Sunday were carried out on the Mezî and Karyaderî regions.

French ministers absent

Israel decides on 'open skies' policy

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel, clipping the wings of its national airline El Al, announced an "open skies" policy on Sunday to boost the number of visitors to the Jewish state. Under the plan adopted by the government, foreign airlines operating in Israel can raise the number of their regularly scheduled flights by 60 per cent. Charter operators can increase their flights by 25 per cent, government officials said. Until now, the number of flights by a foreign airline on a given line could not exceed the number flown by El Al. The "open skies" policy, the first such aviation reform in 15 years, is due to go into effect in three weeks. Tourism Minister Uzi Baran said there would also be open price competition among the airlines.

9 women, 3 children gunned down in Natal

DURBAN (R) — A gang of 20 black men shot dead nine women and three children early in a dawn raid on Sunday on a black rural settlement, police said. The attack took place at 4:30 a.m. (0230 GMT) near Richmond in the volatile Natal midlands region. The gunmen attacked seven homesteads in the settlement, police spokesman Henry Bhudram said.

Jordan Times

An independent Arabic political daily newspaper published weekly by the Jordan Times Foundation

Ahtisaari wins presidential election

HELSINKI (AP) — Former U.N. peace broker Martti Ahtisaari won Finland's first direct presidential election Sunday after promising to help solve the country's worst economic troubles in 60 years. With 100 per cent of the vote counted, Mr. Ahtisaari had 53.9 per cent to Defence Minister Elisabeth Rehn's 46.1 per cent. "I would like to see the economy improving and more jobs for the unemployed," said Mr. Ahtisaari, leader of the main opposition Social Democratic Party. "As president I will try to improve the security of the people in every way possible." Mr. Ahtisaari succeeds President Mauno Koivisto, 70, retiring after two six-year terms. It was Finland's first direct presidential election since its independence from Russia in 1917. Previously, voters chose states of electors, who in turn chose the president. Mr. Ahtisaari, 56, who led negotiations for Namibia's independence during his 20-year career abroad, won a post that traditionally has been limited to foreign policy questions.

Majali pledges legal action against violators of food and drug laws

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government will ask the general prosecutor to investigate charges raised by Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas that a good quantity of food and medicine that reaches the market is unfit for consumption, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali said Sunday.

Dr. Majali said the government would provide the general prosecutor with all information it has on the case and ask him to collect other relevant information from the public and the Lower House of Parliament.

Instructions will be issued to all government departments to "put all official documents they have at the disposal of the general prosecutor," Dr. Majali told the House at the end of a three-day session held to discuss Dr. Malhas' charges that appeared in a weekly tabloid over two weeks ago.

Dr. Majali said people suspected of violating regulations related to food and medicine standards would be referred to court. House Speaker Taher Al Masri asked the Public Free-

doms and General Health committees to provide the House with a report on the results of investigations that they have launched into the issue in two weeks.

The executive authority has the prime responsibility in initiating reform and taking immediate and decisive measures (on the food and medicine situation). The responsibilities of the (House) are no less important and the House has to shoulder them through following up and monitoring the measures the government will take and putting them in the right direction, Mr. Masri said at the end of the session in which 37 deputies spoke on Dr. Malhas' charges.

"If it becomes necessary, the House will take all measures that the Constitution and laws make available to it (to ensure this)," Mr. Masri said.

Mr. Masri said the public's response to Dr. Malhas' charges show their thirst for reform in all government agencies, and asserted that the House would continue to check the government's actions "in all fields."

Twenty-seven out of the 37 deputies who spoke on the issue supported Dr. Malhas.

(Continued on page 5)

Arafat-Peres meeting uncertain

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAEL AND the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) warily weighed on Sunday whether to embark on another round of talks this week in Cairo between Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Just a week after both men walked hand-in-hand in Davos, Switzerland, the PLO said a Cairo meeting was off unless Mr. Peres was authorised to reach a final accord on security issues that have delayed a troop pullout from Gaza and Jericho.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had said last week an accord was still weeks away but told his cabinet on Sunday that he hoped the Peres-Arafat talks would go forward.

"I am interested that this meeting take place," a senior official quoted Mr. Rabin as telling the cabinet.

However, Mr. Rabin was also quoted as saying the "PLO always taking and we are always giving." He gave no public indication that Mr. Peres would be allowed to meet the PLO Executive Committee on

Mr. Peres, who met with Mr. Rabin immediately on his return to Israel from the United States Sunday evening, said after meeting Mr. Rabin that the matter remained unresolved.

Asked if he would meet Mr. Arafat as planned, Mr. Peres told reporters: "I hope so. We have to make several clarifications."

He said he and Mr. Rabin had "agreed on what is necessary in order to continue the negotiations." He added the heart of the difficulty was bridging a half century of suspicion, not one specific issue or another.

"We have to overcome a very wide gap... people think that the issue (is) where will stand the policeman, here or there. It is not the (issue) of the policeman, it is the depth of the feelings, of the worries and of the hopes that we are negotiating about," he said.

In Tunis, a senior PLO official said a final decision on whether Mr. Arafat would meet Mr. Peres in Cairo on Monday was to be made by the PLO Executive Committee on

Sunday night.

The official, Yasser Abed-Rabbo, said Mr. Arafat would only go if the PLO had indications the Cairo meeting would reach a final agreement on security arrangements to implement the Sept. 13 deal on Palestinian self-rule.

Said Kamal, the PLO representative to Cairo, said Mr. Arafat would meet Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Tuesday to review the outcome of Mr. Peres' talks with a Palestinian delegation.

Mr. Arafat is expected in Cairo on Tuesday to meet Mr. Mubarak "as well as to follow the (Israeli-Palestinian) negotiations or the meeting to take place on Monday night," said Mr. Kamal.

The negotiations will focus on the list of points drawn up in Davos when Mr. Peres and Mr. Arafat met on Jan. 29-30. Mr. Kamal told reporters after talks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa.

Both sides emerged optimistic from the Davos encounter. But while Mr. Arafat said he

(Continued on page 5)

Ekeus wants more Iraqi steps

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Senior United Nations envoy Rolf Ekeus said Sunday he was not satisfied Iran had given him enough information on its dismantling of chemical weapons. The official Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) reported.

"In the chemical area we are not satisfied that Iraq has given us the full detailed information necessary for us to be definite that all these weapons have been taken away," the agency quoted him as saying on arrival from Baghdad.

"We are continuing a dialogue to put a system in place which could prevent Iraq from acquiring these weapons, but there is still much to do."

Mr. Ekeus, who held five days of intensive talks in the Iraqi capital, heads the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) disarming Iraq under terms that ended the 1991 Gulf war over Kuwait.

He was due to hold talks with Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah shortly after arrival and would later on Sunday meet Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah. He is due to leave on Monday.

He said he had achieved some limited progress in his talks with Iraqi officials last week but there were some "important problems" which remain unresolved.

The Baghdad talks centred on how to translate into action Security Council resolution 715 which forbids Baghdad from reacquiring weapons banned under the 1991 ceasefire.

In Baghdad, Iraqi Foreign Ministry Under-Secretary Riyad Al Qaisi reiterated his country's position that it had done all that is required to have the oil embargo, in place since Baghdad invaded Kuwait in 1990, lifted.

Mr. Ekeus said before leaving Baghdad political issues needed to be tackled before the ban on oil exports was lifted.

Both declined to identify areas of difference and points of agreement.

In Kuwait, Mr. Ekeus said he had come to listen to Kuwaiti views on the regional situation.

"The visit is very important because Kuwait is a major player at the U.N. on these

questions and exerts very important influence. Therefore it

(Continued on page 5)

King returns home after condoling Assad and discussing peace process

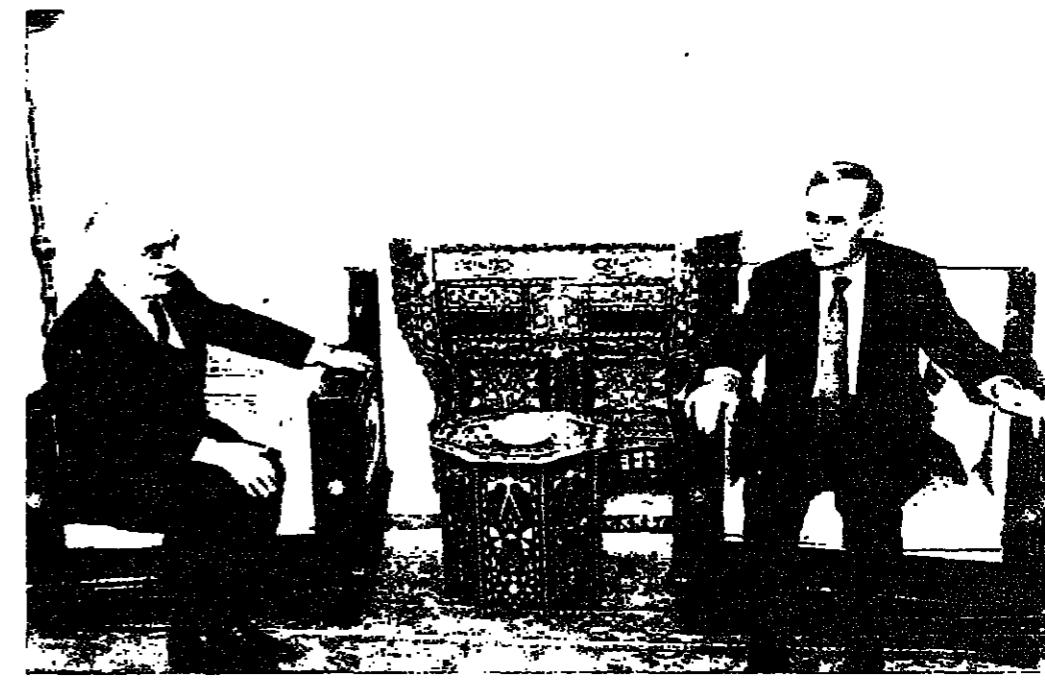
AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein paid a visit to Syria to offer condolences to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad over the death of son Basel Al Assad last month.

King Hussein and President Assad also exchanged views on regional and international issues, including the latest developments in the Middle East, in addition to bilateral relations. The two leaders stressed the need for continuous consultation and coordination between both countries.

King Hussein was also expected to brief Mr. Assad on the outcome of his talks in Washington last month with President Bill Clinton. Mr. Assad also met Mr. Clinton in Geneva earlier and both leaders have been in contact by telephone since then.

The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein.

On the Syrian side, the meeting was attended by Syrian vice-president Abdul Halim Khaddam and Zuheir



His Majesty King Hussein with Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad in Damascus on Sunday (AFP)

Masharaka, Prime Minister Mahmoud Al-Zoubi and Foreign Minister Farouk Al-Sharaa.

Upon arrival at Damascus airport, the King was received by President Assad, Mr. Khad-

dam and Mr. Masharqa, Mr. Zoubi, Mr. Sharaa and senior Syrian officials.

The King and the accompanying delegation were seen off and received upon departure.

tude and arrival by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the speakers of the Upper and Lower House of Parliament and senior military and civil officials.

Hammad: 2 suspects confess to blasts, linked to Afghan returnees

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Interior Minister Salameh Hammad on Sunday announced that two people had confessed to planting the explosive devices that went off in two cinema theatres and said there was a broader plot to destabilise Jordan through subversion.

The minister's comments, carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, indicated that the two suspects could be linked to an underground group called "Jeish Mohammad" (Mohammad's Army) comprising mostly of Jordanians who returned home after fighting the 1980-90 Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Mr. Hammad said the two, Mohammad Ali Shehadeh, 26, a construction material salesman, and Eid Saleh Jahaleen, 31, a plumber, had admitted to planting the explosive devices at Amman's Rivoli theatre on Jan. 26 and Zarqa's Salwa theatre on Feb. 1.

The two blasts injured at least seven people, including Mr. Jahaleen who suffered serious wounds to the lower part of his body at the Zarqa explosion.

The nature of Mr. Jahaleen's injuries were such as they could have been sustained only from a position of close proximity, possibly while handling the explosive device which went off prematurely, sources said.

As such, they said, he was an immediate suspect after his removal to hospital and details he provided upon interrogation led to other arrests.

First reports spoke of five

people arrested last Wednesday, one day after the Zarqa blast.

More detentions were reported shortly thereafter.

Mr. Shehadeh and Mr. Jahaleen also admitted to having been behind another bomb which was safely removed at Akroush Supermarket at Safoud, northwest of Amman, last year.

"The criminals have confessed that they carried out these attacks," Mr. Hammad said, paying tribute to the "strenuous and relentless efforts of the Public Security Department" for the arrest of the suspects.

The suspects "are part of a group which will be disclosed later," the minister said.

"They have links with some people who have returned from Afghanistan."

"Investigations are continuing to uncover other de-

tails and plots aimed at harming national security and stability," he added.

The two bombings at the two theatres known for screening X-rated movies, coupled with the discovery of the device planted at the Safoud Supermarket which sells alcohol, had immediately made religious extremists

(Continued on page 5)

Yemeni pact to be signed in Jordan

SANA (Agencies) — A committee formed by Yemen's feuding political parties to pave the way for a peace accord said on Sunday that they would sign the accord in Jordan.

Sanaa radio said the date for the signing in Amman will be fixed within a week after the committee completes its work. The committee set Thursday as a deadline to remove remaining obstacles.

Sanaa radio said the date for the signing in Amman will be fixed within a week after the committee completes its work. The committee set Thursday as a deadline to remove remaining obstacles.

Differences between President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his deputy, Ali Saleh Al-Bedduh have delayed the signing of the accord worked out by the committee about three weeks.

Mr. Saleh's General Peoples Congress (GPC) and the Beedduh's Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) ruled North and South Yemen respectively until they merged in May 1990 creating a unified Yemen.

In a joint statement, Mr. Ekeus and Mr. Aziz said both sides "expressed their readiness to expedite the process of establishing ongoing monitoring and verification in a spirit of goodwill."

They said their aim was to enable the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to report to the U.N. Security Council "that, in their view, Iraq had taken all the actions called for by paragraph 22 of Resolution 687."

The peace accord provides for political, economic, military and administrative reforms aimed at ending the country's political crisis threatening to tear it apart. The YSP and GPC have been at odds since last July.

Disagreements over the

venue, the non-Yemeni groups to be invited to witness the ceremony, security measures to protect their leaders and the steps to follow the signing of the accord were delayed by political sources said.

The radio did not say which of these problems were solved.

Plane seized

Yemeni authorities seized an Uganda-flagged Boeing 707 Sunday, because it allegedly was carrying an unlicensed cargo of light military gear destined for southern Yemen.

An official Interior Ministry announcement said the cargo included telecommunications equipment.

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Middle East News

Turkey, Iran and Syria oppose any breakup of Iraq

ISTANBUL (Agencies) — Foreign ministers from Turkey, Syria and Iran have stressed their opposition to any breakup of Iraq, fearing it could lead to the possible creation of an Kurdish state in the north.

In a joint statement issued after a meeting here Saturday, the ministers said they would "oppose any efforts aimed at dismantling Iraq, on whatever pretext."

Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin and his Syrian and Iranian counterparts Farouk Al Sharaa and Ali Akbar Velayati had gathered to examine the situation in the Kurdish zone in northern Iraq.

"The future of Iraq must be determined only by the free will of the whole population... declaration and activities by certain groups in several western countries aimed at encouraging separationism is not acceptable and must end," the statement said.

The three ministers also called on Iraq to conform to United Nations resolutions on disarmament, thereby enabling it to "assume its role in the international community again."

They urged Iraq to lift all restrictions and measures in force against "citizens in the north of Iraq."

The Kurds, who have controlled northern Iraq since the end of the Gulf war in February 1991, have proclaimed a federated state in the area.

But Turkish, Syria and Iran, with significant numbers of Kurdish citizens on their own territories, fear the creation of an independent Kurdish state in Iraq.

Mr. Velayati said in a joint press conference following the meeting that all three countries had "a fundamental interest in the situation in northern Iraq," adding that developments there would have "an impact on national security for all three countries."

It is the fourth meeting on the issue since November 1992 and came amid concern that a de facto independent state was

emerging in a Western-monitored zone set aside for Iraqi Kurds to avoid attacks from Baghdad.

Mr. Cetin also called on Baghdad to lift an embargo on electricity supplies in the north.

River accord elusive

Turkey rejected Syrian efforts for a water-use pact along two vital Middle East rivers.

Syria said a formal agreement on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers was needed to avoid escalating the dispute.

Mr. Sharaa did not mention what action his country could take to urge Turkey to sign a pact. But Turkey looks to Syria to help its fight against Kurdish rebels.

Speaking at a joint news conference after the meeting, Mr. Sharaa described the two rivers as "international waters" whose flow should be subject to a three-way pact with Turkey, Syria and Iraq.

The rivers originate in Turkey and join before emptying into the Gulf. The Euphrates passes through Syria and Iraq, and the Tigris runs through Iraq and forms part of Syria's border with Turkey and Iran.

Syria is concerned Turkey may siphon off too much water, restrict the flow or cut it all together.

For Turkey, however, settling the water issue is less urgent than trying to clamp down on separatist guerrillas of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK).

The group has been waging a war since 1984 for self-rule in southeastern Turkey. More than 10,000 people have been killed in the fighting.

Turkey has called on Syria to remove guerrilla camps on its side of the border. Other camps are based in Iraq.

"We condemn every kind of terrorism," said Mr. Sharaa.

He also said distinction should be made between "terrorism" and the "legitimate fight" of the Palestinians against Israeli rule.

Khartoum gunmen shot dead

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Security forces shot dead two gunmen accused in the killing of 13 worshippers at a mosque, and on Sunday the government displayed explosives, automatic rifles and pistols found with the alleged attackers.

Interior Minister Abdul Rahman Mohammad Hussein said the motivation for the slayings Friday remained unknown and denied reports that the attackers were from a religious extremist organisation.

"So far, we could not make any link between this group and any country or intelligence organisation," Brigadier Hussein said at a news conference.

"Friday's shooting was the worst attack in the Khartoum area. Shortly after noon

prayers, gunmen opened fire on worshippers at the main mosque of the Ansar Sunna sect in Omdurman, across the Nile from Khartoum. Two children were among the 12 dead. Seventeen others were injured, one of whom died later.

Earlier the gunmen attacked a police station and killed two officers to steal weapons and a getaway car.

Brig. Hussein said three gunmen took part in the shooting, not the five reported at first. He said troops killed two of the attackers and wounded the third in a battle Saturday.

The slain men were from West Africa and the wounded one was from North Africa, Brig. Hussein said, without elaborating. He said a Yemeni national also was arrested for

possible indirect involvement in the killings.

The London-based Al Hayat daily Sunday reported that members of the Ansar Sunna sect accused a rival religious organisation called "Al Takfir wa Al Hijra" of being behind the killings.

But Brig. Hussein said there is nothing to link the killers with "Al Takfir wa Al Hijra."

The group, which first appeared in Egypt in 1977, has hardly been heard of since.

Brig. Hussein also rejected claims that the assailants were connected to the government.

Opposition figures suggested the government was behind the slaying because of the Ansar Sunna sect's stand against the regime. The sect is similar to the Wahabis of Saudi Arabia.

Cairo trial resumes today

CAIRO (AFP) — The trial of militants accused of trying to kill Egyptian Prime Minister Atef Sedki is scheduled to resume here on Monday despite the weekend murder of a key prosecution witness.

The trial opened briefly on Saturday hours after gunmen shot dead automobile dealer Sayed Ahmad Yehia, who sold a car to militants which they rigged with a bomb in a bid to kill Dr. Sedki near his northern Cairo home on Nov. 25.

The case in Cairo's high military court was adjourned until Monday, court sources said.

Mr. Yehia, who was to have given evidence on Saturday, was shot dead late Friday in his showroom at Shebeen Al Qanater, some 30 kilometres northeast of Cairo, along with a security guard, an employee and a customer, police said.

A policeman was also reportedly wounded.

After the bombing attack on Dr. Sedki which killed a schoolgirl and injured 21 people, Interior Minister Hassan Al Afifi offered rewards to any person who could speed up the investigation and guaranteed them anonymity.

But days later press reports identified Sayed Ahmad Yehia as having received \$12,000 from General Afifi for providing information on individuals who bought the car used in the attack.

Mr. Yehia's brother and a third person were also rewarded, the press said.

Police later said the information led to the arrest of nine members of the underground Talab Al Fatah, (Vanguard of the Conquest). Six other defendants in the case are on the run and wanted by authorities.

The Talab Al Fatah is considered to be the armed wing of the Al Jihad movement, which claimed responsibility for the attack on the prime minister.

The nine defendants were silent Saturday as the chief judge, General Ahmad Abdulla, held proceedings and appeared unaware that gunmen had killed Mr. Yehia, Egyptian journalists said. The trial began on Jan. 22, even though six other accused have managed to evade arrest.

The group would have cheered if they had known about the killing, journalists added.

Court sources said that Mr. Yehia could have identified a number of the defendants.

But a lawyer specialising in trials of militants said on condition of anonymity that Mr. Yehia's murder will have no impact on the sentences imposed on the accused. The sentences were decided before the trial began.

Defendant Salah Al Sayed told the court Saturday he had been tortured while in detention and the court agreed to have a doctor check the claim.

Several policemen involved in the arrests gave testimony, Egyptian journalists said. Journalists for foreign news organisations were banned from the courtroom.

Friday's murder comes three days after another extremist group, the Al Gamaa Al Islamiyah, lost seven of its members in a gunbattle with police, which the militants denounced as a "massacre."

Western embassies urged their citizens to be on alert Thursday after the Gamaa destroyed foreign tourists and investors to stay out of Egypt.

Police have detained 90 suspects in the Yehia killing, security sources said on Sunday.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel jails 3 Palestinian for life

TEL AVIV (AP) — An Israeli court on Sunday sentenced to consecutive life sentences three Palestinian linked to Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction who were convicted of killing four Israelis. A court official said that the first defendant was sentenced to four life sentences, the second to three and the third to two life sentences. He did not elaborate. The three-man ring was convicted in the 1990 killings of two Israeli teenagers and an Israeli taxi driver, plus slaying an Israeli soldier in 1993. Israel Radio said that the three, relatives from the West Bank village of Katana and identified by the army as Abed Shamasneh, 30, Mohammad Shamasneh, 24, and Ibrahim Shamasneh, 30, had confessed to the killings. During Sunday's hearing one of the accused asked to speak but was cut off by Judge Yaakov Bazak, who said he did not want to allow a political speech. "We are not the criminals you want to see," Israel Radio quoted the unidentified Palestinian as saying. "We are not child-killers. The children we killed were 17 and 18. And we are in the midst of a struggle with the government of Israel." An army statement announcing the capture of the three in November said they were affiliated with Fatah.

Iran to reinforce naval units in Gulf

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian security forces are to strengthen their naval units in the Gulf to halt trafficking in smuggled goods, a police commander said. Kiumars Abu, quoted on Sunday by the official Iranian news agency IRNA, said the police had sent combat units to the southeastern province of Hormozgan, and would reinforce coastal stations in a bid to step up the fight against smuggling. He said 80 per cent of the smuggled goods entered through Hormozgan, the gateway for imports of contraband goods such as alcoholic drinks, video and satellite equipment and heavily taxed luxury items from the United Arab Emirates. A large proportion of the drugs arriving from Pakistan also come in through Hormozgan.

Rights activist joins Tunisia contest

TUNIS (R) — Moncef Marzouki, outgoing president of Tunisia's League for Defence of Human Rights, announced on Sunday his candidacy for presidential elections scheduled for March 20. President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali had been the only known candidate to date and is expected to announce officially this week his intention to seek another five-year term. Several legal opposition groups support him. Mr. Marzouki has little chance of having his candidacy accepted as the electoral code stipulates candidates must have the support of at least 30 parliamentarians or leaders of municipal councils. The 141 seats in parliament and all municipal councils bar one are held by the ruling party led by Mr. Ben Ali.

Iran sends forces to track down drug bandits

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran has sent police reinforcements to track down drug traffickers who shot dead four people in a highway robbery and later kidnapped three soldiers in a highway robbery and later kidnapped three soldiers in the country's southeast, a police commander said Saturday. The commander, quoted by the official Iranian news agency IRNA, said the extra police units were dispatched to Sistan-Baluchestan province on Friday and have helped secure roads previously under the control of the traffickers. The bandits had in the past few weeks blocked roads from Khach to Zahedan, the province's capital, and from Zabol to Zahedan to rob travellers, the commander said. The bandits blocked the Zahedan-Zabol road on Thursday, killed four passengers on the bus and robbed the other and then abducted three soldiers while returning to Zahedan, IRNA said. The fate of the soldiers was not given. Authorities arrested two armed men who belong to a clan involved in trafficking drugs to Europe, it said.

Qatar foreign minister in Cuba

HAVANA (R) — Qatar Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Ben Jassim Ben Jaber Al Thani arrived in Cuba Saturday for talks on potential economic collaboration with the communist-ruled island. The two sides are to discuss ways to increase trade and investment, as well as to explore opportunities for joint ventures in various sectors. The visit is the first by a member of the royal family to Cuba since 1959.

Kuwait tightens rules on charities

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait, a generous source of funds for Islamic and social welfare charities, will tighten rules governing their operations to prevent abuse and ensure its knows where the money goes, newspapers reported on Sunday. Minister of Social Affairs and Labour Jassem Al Ouda said he would issue new regulations in the next few days regulating methods of collection to protect charities from "intruders" who could take advantage of their work, the newspapers said. He said the rules would come into force before the start around Feb. 11 of the Holy Month of Ramadan, a traditional time of alms-giving.

U.S. welcomes Cyprus deal on measures

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States Saturday welcomed an agreement between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot leaders to reopen Nicosia airport as part of U.N.-proposed confidence-building measures aimed at uniting the island. "We believe this is an important step towards achieving a just and permanent solution to the Cyprus problem," White House spokeswoman Dee Dee Meyers said in a statement. Robert Lamb, the State Department coordinator on Cyprus, told reporters in Cyprus Friday that both sides had accepted the measures "openly and freely," although "the level of trust between the two sides is low."

Egypt sunny and warm but cold on tourists

By Samia Nakhou

Reuter

CAIRO — It is sunny and warm in Egypt this winter but the season has been one of the coldest for the country's tourist industry.

A breeze ruffles the sails of red and white feluccas on the Nile but the boats stand idle. The river, once buzzing with cruisers, is empty and the boatmen sit on the banks awaiting tourists who never come.

The outlook is bleak. Muslim militants, in a new attempt to damage the economy, have told foreign tourists and investors to leave the country for their own safety.

The Gamaa Al Islamiya (Islamic Group), the largest fundamentalist movement trying to overthrow the government of President Hosni Mubarak, gave the warning in response to a raid in which police shot dead seven militants.

"We implore tourists and investors to leave the country because the next operations will be extremely ferocious and strong," it said in a state-

ment.

Bored taxi drivers, staking hotels, jump at the sight of any client. Waiters miss the fat tips of the good old days and hoteliers speak nostalgically of past prosperous years.

"Look, the weather is nice and beautiful. It is sunny and warm but there are no tourists. Before the terrorist attacks, tourism was good. There was work and the country was booming. Now we're on the road to ruin," said Al Dagwa, a boatman.

"After a while we will go begging on the streets. May God destroy the terrorists. They have blackened and destroyed our lives," he added.

Militants who began attacking foreign tourists 16 months ago have hit not only hotels and travel agents but also small businesses and suppliers that relied heavily on tourism.

Three foreigners have been killed and dozens wounded in the political violence.

Taialat Mohammmed Yousef, whose company pro-

vides most hotels with plastic cups and laundry bags, said his had gone down 40 per cent since the attacks began.

If the occupancy at hotels is high they put requests for losts of things. If their business is low, the orders are low and so the sales and profit diminished," he said.

"Every time I hear there is an attack, I feel a knife is cutting through my chest. Every attack means additional losses. We're making no profit and we barely cover our expenses."

Police boats cruise the Nile River for 24 hours a day to keep an eye on the few tourists in the feluccas.

"We read in the newspapers that Germany would be sending a tourist group. But we have seen no Germans or anybody else," said boatman Hassan Al Dagwa.

In the first 10 months of 1993, Egypt's receipts from tourism fell by \$900 million or 42 per cent, compared with the same period of 1993, the ministry said.

The number of visitors fell 22 per cent over the same period but they tended to stay less time and spend less money than in the past, it added. The latest attack was

feed their families.

Many say they live on the five pounds (\$2.50) a day which the boat owners give them to keep them going until the crisis ends. Some have switched jobs to porters or cab drivers.

With foreign and Gulf Arab tourists scarce, boatmen have cut their prices from 25 pounds to 15 or 10 (\$3.3) an hour to attract Egyptians, mainly students, to be able to make a living.

"Every attack is a blow to us. We feel more strangled and suffocated. Every time we say the country is back on track and is booming again, we get another setback. Every time we hear of an attack we know we're getting poorer," said taxi driver Sayed Al Shirkawi.

"Whenever a bus comes and tourists get off, we always keep our eyes skinned, looking at people walking in case there's any militant who might attack. We feel like security guards looking after them," said boatman Dagwa.

"On the boat, we always keep our eyes on the foreigners. We are always worried about them. When they get back on their bus, we sigh with relief."

Hotels said the occupancy rate at their five-star hotels was between 30 and 40 per cent less than last year despite a 15 per cent cut in prices for package tours and businessmen.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

YESTERDAY'S HIGH TEMPERATURES

Amman 14, Aqaba 21 Humidity readings: Amman 29 per cent, Aqaba 35 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

AMMAN: Dr. Jibril Halasa 819220 Dr. Yacoub Sakkour 819548 Dr. Iman Al Asmar 800504 Dr. Jamil Marqa 776149 Fier pharmac 661912 Fordos pharmac 776136 Al Asema pharmac 637055 Nairobi pharmac 623672 Al Salam pharmac 636730 Yusoub pharmac 644945 Shunc

Majali pledges legal action

(Continued from page 1)

"The government will not allow the entry (into the market) of any food and medicine shipments that does not meet (standards and specifications)," Dr. Malhas told the House.

Some deputies lashed out at the Ministry of Supply for allegedly allowing the entry of shipments of sub-standard food into the market, with one lawmaker saying he would request a "general discussion" of the situation at the ministry in order to investigate alleged cases of violations of the law.

In his speech to the House, Dr. Majali reaffirmed the government's commitment to protect the citizens in cooperation with the House. But he took a firm stand against deputies who questioned his cabinet's abilities and determination to fight corruption and bring about reform.

Responding to the severe criticism that deputies made of his cabinet, Dr. Majali said some deputies seized "the opportunity to shake the status of the government. But we say here in front of you (that) we hide nothing from you and have provided you with all (the information) you demanded. We have nothing to hide or to fear."

Dr. Majali said some deputies were still addressing the government with slanderous language.

"But we will not respond to these accusations and will stick to (proper) norms of talking... out of our concern for consolidating democracy," which benefited from the debate that took place in the House over Dr. Malhas' allegations, Dr. Majali told the lawmakers.

Dr. Majali said that cases of corruption and abuse of office in Jordan were an exception, saying that they do not exceed similar violations in any other country.

"Assure you that our food is safe and that our medicine is safe," said Dr. Majali.

But, he said, the government would take more measures to ensure the safety of food and medicine and raise the standards governing the safety and quality of food and medicine.

He said the government would prepare draft laws to establish separate food and medicine directorates and to prevent monopolies in producing and marketing food and medicine.

There is a confidence gap between the citizens and officials and hence is the big noise that this issue has caused," said Deputy Mohammad Abu Oleim, voicing support for Dr. Malhas in the fight against corruption.

"I thanked God when I heard about the food and medicine that are unfit for consumption because most people in the Jordan Valley do not eat meat," said Deputy Jameel Al Hishoush in a reference to poverty in his constituency.

In response to the deputies' speeches on Sunday, Dr. Malhas reiterated these charges but said the Ministry of Health, with the support of the government, had started a process of reform that would plug all loopholes in legislations.

Suspects confess to blasts

(Continued from page 1)

enced to death. The death sentences, except those on the two at large, were commuted to life terms by His Holiness King Hussein.

Jeish Mohammad was at one point reported to be the "military wing" of the Muslim Brotherhood, but the Brotherhood strongly denied any such link with the group.

According to experts on the Islamic movement in Jordan, Jeish Mohammad was set up by hardliners who were once members of the Brotherhood but who quit the group after being disillusioned over what they saw as the leadership's moderate approach and continuing the group to the mainstream political process.

Most of the group's members are believed to be Jordanian volunteers who fought with the Afghan rebels and returned home after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1990.

Eighteen members of the group were found guilty in 1992 of carrying out or plotting attacks against senior government and security officials, state buildings and foreign diplomats as well as liquor stores and night clubs.

Eight of them, including two in absentia, were sent

Agenda issues untouched

(Continued from page 1)

its own track. On the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, the delegations concerned discussed the negotiating principles. The Palestinians were involved in discussions not covered by the Palestinian-Israeli talks in Taba, Cairo, Davos, Paris and other places.

The key stumbling-blocks remain the control of border crossings with Egypt and Jordan into the new autonomous areas and measures for protecting Jewish settlements in Gaza.

He said that every country concerned has been discussing

The right to know highlighted by Dr. Malhas' crusade

By Waleed Sadi

The immediate issue in the Malhas affair that surfaced after the Wednesday parliamentary debate on the state of the medicines and foodstuff in the country was whether the minister of health has gone wrong by not confining himself to the proper political and legal channels for correcting the wrongs that he said existed in the current legislation and practices. In other words, his opponents in the Lower House of Parliament who took the floor Wednesday, found fault with the minister for going public with the information about the condition of food and drugs instead of limiting his probe to and within official circles. This aspect of the debate is certainly a human rights issue that deserves scrutiny as well.

In strictly pragmatic terms, this concern needs to be put in proper perspective. The most viable way to go about it is to view it against the backdrop of precedents both within Jordan

Human Rights File

and outside it. The first thing that comes to mind is the endemic debate about the dangers of smoking in the U.S. which started acrimonious debates across the world. The first news broke out in the U.S. about the link between smoking and cancer or heart diseases, there was a deliberate campaign by cigarette companies to keep the public as little acquainted with the medical evidence about this link as possible.

The second, frontal attack by the cigarette manufacturers was to offer doctored medical evidence to dispute the findings of the scientific community incriminating cigarette smoking as a principle culprit in heart and cancer diseases. It was only recently, and after some four decades, that doctors who had worked for cigarette corporations and defended their cause have come forward and admitted having lied or doctored their medical information in order to suit the purposes of the manufacturers.

The same goes for nuclear contamination. History is replete with cases where establishments succeeded in hushing up

disasters resulting from nuclear energy. Blood contamination with HIV or hepatitis or food contaminated by pesticides or insecticides have likewise been treated with maximum secrecy. This is not to mention water poisoning and air pollution, also covered up for too long.

It is fair to say in conclusion that it is part and parcel of governments nature whether in the developed or developing countries, to do whatever possible to hide basic information about such threats to life in a bid to avoid panic and political fallout. Crisis containment by keeping the masses effectively out of the "healing process" has been state policy across the board and is simply the rule of the thumb everywhere in the world, including the most advanced countries, for obvious reasons.

"Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) stipulates that everyone has the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas provided this is done in a responsible way."

Throughout contemporary history only when the media succeeded in getting to the bottom of the stories about dangers to life were there real, determined efforts to reverse the tide and rectify dangers posed by contaminations, poisoning or pollution. The success of the press in exposing and dealing with such health problems leads in turn to the involvement of the public in the cleansing process. Hopefully, the process of dissemination of vital and correct information and the subsequent participation of the people are conducted in a responsible way. Otherwise, the process of public involvement through the press could become counter productive. There is nothing worse than hysteria in these matters. And when hysteria is deliberately touched off to undermine a certain country, then there is cause to find criminal responsibility. Yet, the

constraints against criminal intents in such issues can be checked and frustrated by a variety of effective ways. The democratic countries in the world have indeed succeeded in protecting themselves against such abuses by laws and practices, but not by keeping the public in the dark for fear of panic.

This is where one could differ with all those who opposed Dr. Malhas for going public. Admittedly his method is still unorthodox in Jordan. However, the Kingdom has already enjoyed some meaningful precedents set by two prominent ministers, Laila Sharaf and Ibrahim Izzeddin have both gone public with their disagreements with their respective cabinets on issues that concerned the people. In retrospect, therefore, the dramatisation of the food and drug problem by Dr. Malhas is a lesser evil compared to the probable risk that would ensue should the problem remain within official circles alone.

Besides, the proper treatment of all such and similar issues requires the participation of the people. This is all the more true in a dynamic democracy such as the one that we all enjoy nowadays in Jordan. The right to know is a cardinal principle in all existing international human rights instruments. This right supercedes the desire to treat problems within governmental circles alone as suggested by some prominent members of Parliament. Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) stipulates that everyone has the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas provided this is done in a responsible way.

Dr. Malhas' assertions appear to be fundamentally correct and made in good faith. Therefore, there is a *prima facie* case in support of his decision to go public. There is also every reason to believe that had the minister gone only official in dealing with stunning and shocking revelations about the food we eat and the medicines we administer, the threats to life in Jordan would have continued indefinitely. We all had a taste of how the government dealt with scandals affecting the people when the lid was put on publicity. No one wants a repetition of earlier performances, thence the overwhelming support for Dr. Malhas' crusade.

Yemeni pact to be signed in Jordan

(Continued from page 1)

However, as it entered Yemeni airspace, the plane was intercepted and forced to land at Hodeida airport, where its cargo and crew were seized, to be said, insisting on anonymity.

The official, a member of the YSP, did not specify what cargo aboard the plane, or say if it carried any passengers.

The Sanaa statement did not specify whether the plane had been forced down or had made a regular stop in Hodeida, a Red Sea port of Yemen about 200 kilometres southwest of Sanaa.

On Thursday the YSP said it had seized anti-aircraft missiles being moved by its northern rivals towards the south.

A YSP spokesman said an army vehicle carrying 40 anti-aircraft missiles from the north and heading south was seized by a southern brigade.

Ekeus wants Iraq steps

(Continued from page 1)

The clause provides for the lifting of the international oil embargo against Iraq once Baghdad has honoured U.S. resolutions calling for the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Ekeus said he tried to emphasize in his talk with Iraqi leaders the "political atmosphere" surrounding the clause.

The joint statement issued by Mr. Ekeus and Mr. Aziz said the "intense phase" of U.N. inspections would continue, and Iraq had "indicated that it would welcome all such inspection teams and facilitate their tasks."

The two sides discussed technical matters in a "professional and business-like manner," the statement said, and their talks "yielded positive results."

They agreed to hold a further round of talks in the first half of March to maintain the momentum in the disarmament process.

Arafat-Peres

(Continued from page 1)

would be ready to sign a final deal in Cairo this week, Mr. Rabin said it needed three or four more weeks and the Israeli army raised its own reservations.

"The security issues are the most important. But they are not the only ones," Mr. Rabin warned on Wednesday. "We will also have to agree on civilian and economic issues."

The key stumbling-blocks remain the control of border crossings with Egypt and Jordan into the new autonomous areas and measures for protecting Jewish settlements in Gaza.

A piercing new spotlight on the ravages of AIDS

By Caroline Richmond

In a few weeks, European scientists will acquire the means to watch the molecular basis of life and to take serial photographs of chemical reactions as they occur. Using a massive particle accelerator, newly completed in Grenoble, France, they will be able to study the human immune system to help develop new treatments for AIDS.

The European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF), a particle accelerator the size of a sports stadium, produces intense light concentrated in an extremely fine beam, like a laser. It differs from a laser by coming in a broad range of wavelengths, including X-rays.

Its resolution will allow pictures to be taken at microsecond intervals; an enzyme can be photographed linking up a chemical reaction inside living cells in a glass dish. It will exert two million atmospheres of force, allowing high-pressure applications. This is impossible elsewhere, including at Britain's major particle accelerator at Daresbury, Cheshire, built in 1980. At Grenoble, synchrotron light is emitted by high-energy electrons which follow a curved trajectory. Initially produced in a linear accelerator (a linac) and then in a circular accelerator (a synchrotron), they have an energy of 6 billion electron-volts. They are injected into a storage ring, 840 metres in circumference, where they circulate for hours at constant energy, guided by bending magnets.

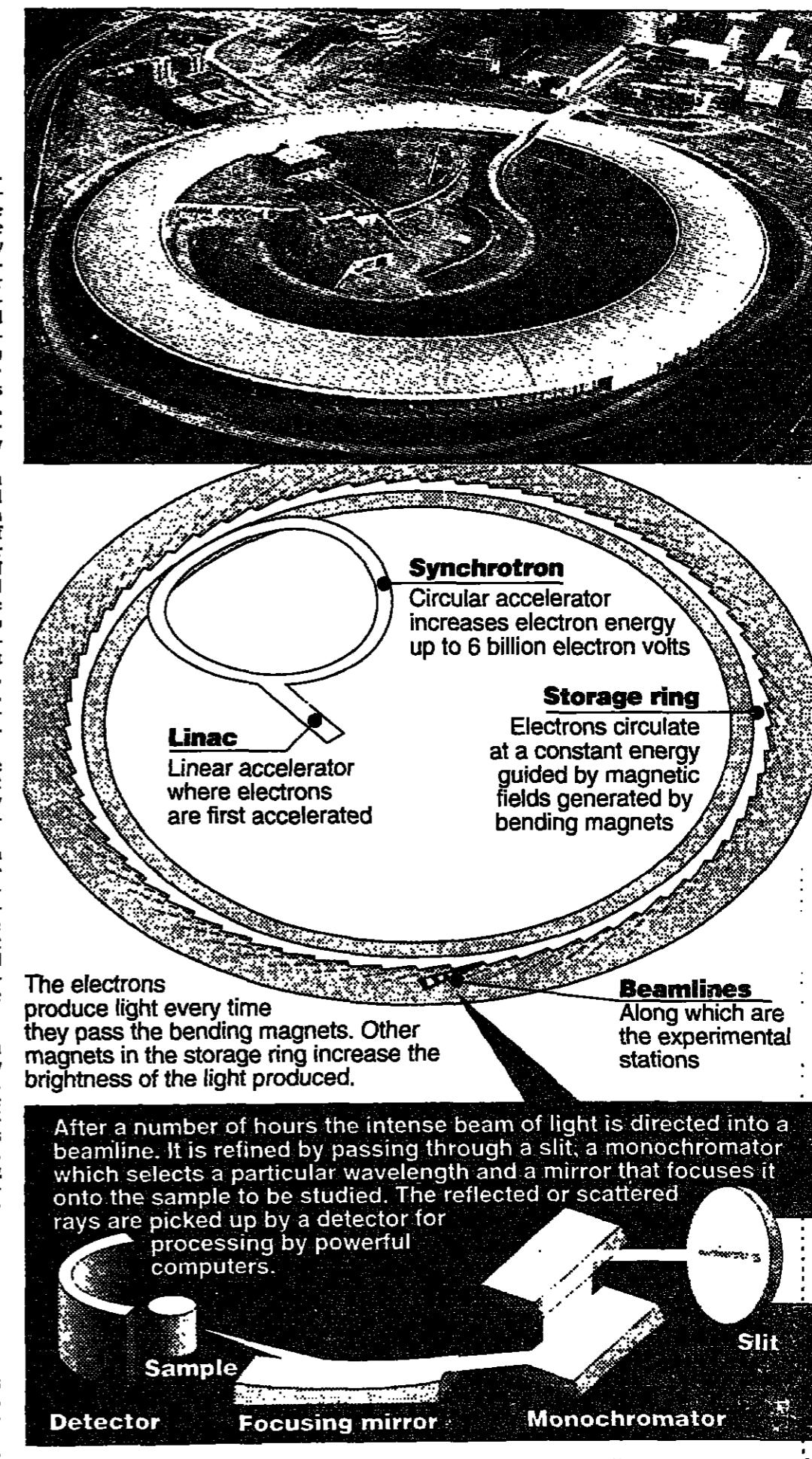
The site was chosen because it is easily accessible from most parts of Europe and already houses a branch of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory — expected to be a major user — and the Institute Laue-Langevin, whose neutron source provides a complementary service. These form a huge science campus at the confluence of the Isere and Drac rivers, with the snow-capped Alps and Chartreuse mountains behind.

The budget is fixed for 11 years until 1998 and offers a degree of financial security that is the envy of the U.S. Most of the funding has come from France and Germany; 14 per cent of the operating costs are being borne by Britain. Other countries participating are Belgium, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.

At 64 workstations around the circumference, the synchrotron light emitted from the storage ring is directed into beamlines. The beam is refined by slits, by a device that selects the chosen wavelength, and by a mirror which focuses it. It then reaches the sample, which may be a crystal, or cells in a test tube — and interacts with to produce reflected or scattered rays, which are recorded by a detector. The data is processed by powerful computers.

The U.S. and Japan are both building similar synchrotrons, but they are three or more years behind Europe. "Big Science" is now so expensive that governments can no longer shoulder the cost alone. According to the magazine *Business Week*, the ESRF, which cost £450 million, would

European Synchrotron Radiation Facility



One of ESRF's users will be Professor Louise Johnson, head of medical biophysics at Oxford University. She works in structural biology, analysing molecules such as viruses.

"Using complete X-ray spectra, we'll be able to record diffraction patterns in a very short timescale, less than a millisecond, following chemical reactions in a test tube. In the first instance this gives us a deeper understanding of nature, but it also has very practical applications — by under-

standing the structure of viruses we can learn how they interact with antibodies, we can understand the immune response.

"We can understand how any why antibodies are specific. And understanding the structure of viruses can lead to a more logical treatment of disease — by knowing the structure we can produce better and more logical treatments for AIDS" — The Observer,

Save water... every drop counts!

Hope fades for 100 missing since China ferry sank

BEIJING (R) — Hopes faded Sunday that searchers would find any of the more than 100 holidaymakers missing since their ferry sank last week in China's murky Yangtze River.

Only three bodies have been recovered downstream of southern Sichuan province's Wan county harbour where the ferry struck a barge on Feb. 1 and sank within three minutes, Xinhua News Agency reported.

More than 100 passengers, most of them rural migrant workers returning home for the Lunar New Year festival, remained missing, apparently trapped in a submerged wreck.

Of the 77 known survivors, 18 were in hospitals and 43 were sent home with compensation of 2,500 (\$287), the official news agency said. All those hospitalised are expected to survive.

The exact number of passengers was unclear. Xinhua said 178 people were pitched into the Yangtze when the Chayun 21 capsized and sank. The official Farmers' daily said more than 210 people had been on board.

Local officials said they had established the identities of 73 of the more than 100 missing. The cause of the collision was not disclosed.

Ozawa: Japan unprepared for Korea crisis

TOKYO (R) — A key figure in Japan's ruling coalition said Sunday Japan is ill-prepared to cope with the crisis over North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons and a looming power struggle in the maverick East Asian State.

"North Korea definitely has nuclear arms," said Ichiro Ozawa, co-leader of the Japan Renewal Party and a vigorous advocate of a stronger, more assertive Japan.

In a television interview, the coalition's chief strategist forecast convulsions in the virulently anti-Japanese state after 81-year-old Stalinist President Kim Il-Sung leaves the scene.

"It is an unbelievably fanatical society," Mr. Ozawa said.

"There will be a very dangerous situation in North Korea in the near future, and no system exists in Japan to cope with a crisis like that," Mr. Ozawa said.

North Korea disclaims any plans to acquire nuclear weapons but its neighbours are anxiously watching its current defiance of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) demands to inspect nuclear sites there to make sure it is telling the truth.

Without authoritative assurances from the U.N. watchdog, there is a risk that South Korea and Japan would feel it necessary to build their own nuclear deterrent.

Just last week, a London newspaper quoted a secret British government report as saying the crisis over North Korea's nuclear and missile programmes was threatening to force Tokyo to abandon its non-nuclear stance.

"The report... reveals that Japan has key bomb-making components, including plutonium and electronic triggers, and has the expertise to 'go nuclear' very quickly," the Sunday Times revealed.

The article prompted immediate denials from the Japanese government, which for 30 years has upheld the principles of banning production, possession or introduction of nuclear arms.

"It is out of the question for Japan to develop nuclear weapons," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

Nevertheless, many military experts say Japan has long had the technology to build both nuclear warheads and the missiles to deliver them.

It also has a strategic policy of stockpiling enriched plutonium for its anticipated nuclear power station needs in the 21st century.

"Japan could readily make a crude nuclear weapon," military analyst Haruo Fujii said.

Calls grow for West to act over Sarajevo massacre

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — A mortar attack on a crowded market that killed 68 people and injured nearly 200 prompted growing calls Sunday for Western intervention to stop the carnage in Bosnia.

An American transport aircraft landed at Sarajevo Airport to evacuate the wounded. U.N. sources said.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic blamed the city's Serb besiegers for the attack. His government appealed for world help to save Muslims from "slow-motion genocide."

In Munich, new U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry said the world was outraged over civilian deaths in Sarajevo and he would confer with President Bill Clinton on possible action by the U.S. to end the carnage.

"I will be leaving for Washington this afternoon to consult with President Clinton and to assess what further actions we should take," Mr. Perry told a conference on European security.

An American medical team went to one of the city's main hospitals, where local doctors were deciding which of the wounded should be airlifted out of the besieged city.

A second U.S. transport aircraft was expected to arrive later Sunday.

The Hercules aircraft, ordered in by Mr. Clinton, were expected to take wounded to a mobile army surgical hospital outside the Croatian capital of Zagreb and to a U.S. hospital near Frankfurt in Germany.

The Bosnian government declared a day of mourning for the victims of Saturday's mortar attack, the worst single atrocity in Bosnia's 22-month-old war.

At the scene of the attack, families came to lay flowers at the market place in memory of the dead. Most of the damage

had been cleared but bloodstains were still visible on the ground.

The U.N. special envoy to former Yugoslavia, Yasushi Akashi, and the military commander of U.N. forces in former Yugoslavia, General Jean Cot, visited the scene.

They were escorted to the site of Saturday's massacre by Sarajevo Mayor Muhammad Kresevjakovic and Bosnian Interior Minister Bakir Alispasic.

They were to meet with Bosnian leaders Sunday before heading back to Zagreb later in the afternoon.

Mr. Akashi said an investigation was underway to determine who had fired the shell that slammed into the crowded market, killing 68 and injuries 195. Many of whom are not expected to survive because of the gravity of their wounds.

He said although there were assumptions as to who was responsible, no final conclusions could yet be drawn.

The U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) said in a statement Saturday that it had "confirmed that the explosion was caused by a single, 120 mm mortar bomb fired from northeast of the market."

But UNPROFOR spokesman Bill Aitken said the investigation was difficult as the shell first hit a tower without fully exploding and then crashed into the market.

France urged international action, including the use of air power, to lift the siege of Sarajevo.

Bosnian Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic and U.N. Ambassador Muhammad Sacirbey, in an interview on Israel Radio, said the Muslims were facing "slow motion genocide" and demanded the world's help.

Mr. Silajdzic also demanded an emergency session of the U.N. Security Council.

In Rome, even Pope John Paul appeared to move closer to support for military intervention in Bosnia Saturday in an emotional condemnation

of the attack. Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg were due in Belgrade for talks with Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

Despite the attack, the Bosnian Muslims said they would still attend peace talks in Geneva on Feb. 10.

Muslim political leaders signalled the bloodshed would be fresh ammunition for their campaign to have a crippling U.N. arms embargo against them lifted.

Mr. Karadzic denied responsibility for the attack. He told a news conference: "This massacre is cold-blooded murder by the Muslim leadership."

A Serb general, Mavro Milovanovic, threatened to block all U.N. aid distribution in Bosnia from Monday unless U.N. investigators agreed to a joint probe to exonerate his forces.

General Sir Michael Rose, the new UNPROFOR chief, has repudiated a Serb denial that they carried out a mortar attack that killed nine Muslims in a food queue in Sarajevo Friday.

The highest previous death toll in a single incident in the city — 16 dead in a bread queue mortar attack in May 1992 — prompted the U.N. to impose sanctions on Serb-led Yugoslavia.

Mr. Perry said Sunday: "I will be leaving for Washington this afternoon to consult with President Clinton and to assess what further actions we should take," Mr. Perry told a conference on European security.

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"I will be leaving for Washington this afternoon to consult with President Clinton and to assess what further actions we should take," Mr. Perry told a conference on European security.

"Meantime, we are in close contact with our allies and the United Nations," he said of the artillery attack on the market place in Sarajevo at a conference on European security.

Evacuation personnel evacuate the bodies of Sarajevo killed when a shell hit the Bosnian capital's main market Saturday (AFP photo)

of the attack.

His voice breaking, the 73-year-old Pontiff branded the attack "a massacre... by criminal hands (which) continue systematically to slaughter and destroy" and said they would answer before God.

Muslim political leaders signalled the bloodshed would be fresh ammunition for their campaign to have a crippling U.N. arms embargo against them lifted.

Survivors and police, many weeping and vomiting, tried to separate the living from the dead among a mass of mangled bodies strewn between market stalls in the city centre.

"These are not the bodies of people — it's minced meat," a distraught man screamed amid the devastation.

In Washington, Mr. Clinton called on the U.N. to identify those responsible for the onslaught and directed Secretary of State Warren Christopher to consult U.S. allies on "appropriate next steps."

Mr. Christopher said after meeting Mr. Clinton he did not rule out air strikes against those deemed responsible for the attack.

A senior administration official said the U.S. had "very little doubt" that the Serbs were responsible for the attack, but the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) said its experts had not been able to come to a clear conclusion.

UNPROFOR military experts, after analysing the crater, have not so far been able to determine with certainty the exact origin of launch of the mortar," a U.N. statement said.

In Rome, even Pope John Paul appeared to move closer to support for military intervention in Bosnia Saturday in an emotional condemnation



China nabs officials who used hookers as bait

BEIJING (R) — Police arrested 15 Communist Party officials who sent prostitutes into hotels and then fined guests caught consorting with them, an official newspaper said. The corrupt cadres of Wannan County in the coastal Jiangxi province squeezed \$40,000 in fines from entrapped suspects in the illegal scheme, the Liaoning Legal News said in editions reaching Beijing Sunday. "The officials and the prostitutes worked together to force the girls' customers to confess their whoring, then hit them with excessive fines," the newspaper said. The 15 officials pocketed the proceeds after paying off the prostitutes and compliant hoteliers.

ABC, Roseanne Arnold clash over series kiss

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A kiss is not just a kiss. Not when it involves Roseanne Arnold and Mariel Hemingway. ABC is refusing to air an episode of Ms. Arnold's hit sitcom "Roseanne" because it shows the two women exchanging a kiss in a gay bar. The episode was slated to air March 1, said Tom Arnold, Roseanne's husband. Arnold said he was told by Steve Weissman, senior vice president and general counsel of ABC Inc., that the scene "is not the lifestyle that most people lead." Arnold's remarks were reported Saturday by the Los Angeles daily news. ABC spokeswoman Sherrie Berger said the network had no comment on the issue. In the episode, Roseanne Conner goes to the bar with bisexual friend Nancy (Sandra Bernhard). Roseanne dances with a woman (Hemingway); kisses — and then has to explain things to husband Dan Goodman. The Arnolds are executive producers of the series, now in its sixth season. Arnold said "Roseanne" producers submitted the gay bar story line two weeks ago to ABC, which rejected it. He said he refused when ABC officials asked him to replace the kissing scene.

Russia 'outraged'

Russia said Sunday it was outraged by a mortar attack on the crowded Sarajevo market and said those who carried it out should be severely punished.

ITAR-TASS News Agency quoted a Foreign Ministry statement as calling for a swift investigation to determine who was responsible for Saturday's shelling.

"The United States shares the outrage of the world at the deliberate attack on innocent people in Sarajevo," he said in his speech Sunday.

"It is time for the responsible leaders among the warring factions to step forward and be counted and it is time for the international community to stand together and bring maximum pressure to bear on them," Mr. Perry added.

"Those guilty of this evil act, whoever they are, should be severely punished," it added.

Mandela's convoy crashes through homeland roadblocks

THABA NCHU, South Africa (AFP) — The motorcade of African National Congress (ANC) President Nelson Mandela crashed through two roadblocks in Bophuthatswana black homeland Sunday as heavily armed police tried to stop him entering the semi-independent territory.

At one of the checkpoints ANC bodyguards drew hand-guns but jumped back in their vehicles when the homeland police did not retaliate.

A Bophuthatswana Defence Force colonel told AFP that because the ANC had not contacted homeland authorities about the visit, they would stop him from entering the semi-independent territory.

ANC National Executive Committee member Terror Lekota said after the incident that homeland police had "told us to stop. But we decided to drive through."

On entering a part of the fragmented homeland, some 80 kilometres west of the Orange Free State provincial capital Bloemfontein, armed police ordered the cavalcade to stop. But Mr. Mandela's armoured Mercedes limousine sped on.

He said if the government would not act against the white extremists. "Then the ANC will take steps even before the (April 26-28) election."

"We cannot allow the right-wing to destroy our offices and the homes of our members," Mr. Mandela told a breakfast with journalists in Bloemfontein.

He said if the government would not act against the white extremists. "Then the ANC will take steps even before the (April 26-28) election."

Mr. Mandela was commenting on a spate of 29 bombings since the beginning of December against ANC offices, homes of ANC officials, electricity pylons and railway lines.

The ANC is also prevented

from operating in the homeland, which is split into several parts across Orange Free State and Western Transvaal provinces.

Mr. Mandela wanted to traverse through part of the homeland in order to reach Tweespruit, in southern Orange Free State, to address an election rally of farm labourers.

Police stopped journalists and searched their cars, seizing an audio cassette from a reporter working for South African radio.

After the meeting in Tweespruit, Mr. Mandela travelled back into the homeland to reach a hill where an ANC president of the early 1950s, James Moroka, was buried.

Mr. Mandela warned South Africa's white extremists Sunday that the ANC could retaliate within weeks if its offices continued to be bombed.

"We also intend to hit back by leaking scandalous stories about Latoya, 36, involving plastic surgery and her sex life. Jackson last month made an out-of-court settlement reputed to run between \$5 and \$25 million to a 14-year-old boy who had accused him of molestation. Jackson's lawyers say the settlement is not an admission of guilt but the singer continues to maintain his innocence. Latoya Jackson has been among the least supportive of Jackson's family during his highly public ordeal, telling a news conference in Israel that she believed the charges levelled against her brother. The Sunday Mirror said Jackson had been persuaded to counter-attack by his mother Katherine as part of a plan to restore his image.

Grand jury to hear testimony in Jackson case

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A Santa Barbara County grand jury will hear testimony this week about allegations that Michael Jackson molested a 13-year-old boy, the Los Angeles Times said. Subpoenas have been delivered to witnesses, but neither Jackson nor the boy were summoned, according to unidentified sources, the paper said. The grand jury will determine whether there is enough evidence for an indictment.

Today's U.S. population of 259 million, growing at a slower rate, is projected to reach 397 million by 2050.

The Clinton administration has decided that stabilising population is crucial to alleviating poverty and hunger.

This contrasts with the policies of the Reagan and Bush administrations, which emphasised population aid by lumping it with politically charged abortion controversies.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Berlusconi launches political movement

ROME (AFP) — Italian television magnate Silvio Berlusconi launched his political movement Forza Italia (Go Italy) Sunday at a Rome convention attended by some 1,500 supporters. Mr. Berlusconi was reportedly planning a series of similar meetings across the country prior to general elections in March. People arriving for the convention were each given a bagful of gifts. Including flags, badges bearing Mr. Berlusconi's face and cassettes of the party anthem. Boosted by his success in reaching a cooperation accord with Umberto Bossi's separatist Northern League, Mr. Berlusconi arrived for the convention Saturday in his private jet, accompanied by Titina Peraudi, a former Communist magistrate. She has announced she will stand for election on a Forza Italia ticket.

Mengistu plans to 'rescue' Ethiopia

HARARE (AFP) — Former Ethiopian dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam broke years of silence in exile in Zimbabwe Sunday to deny that he voluntarily fled his country and to announce plans to "rescue" Ethiopia. This disgusting political situation in Ethiopia today has left no choice for the people of Ethiopia except to fight for their democratic rights using all the means available in their hands," Mr. Mengistu said in a long, rambling and bitter statement published in the independent Sunday Gazette. He said this would lead Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa into a greater political tragedy than ever before. "Because of this grave political and military situation at home I have received a call once again from every sector of Ethiopian society to contribute towards the realisation of peace, justice, freedom and democracy. "I have been challenged for the second time by the people to rescue my country. Indeed, I shall arise to their expectations and help my country survive once again in spite of all political odds."

China opens biggest nuclear plant

HONG KONG (AFP) — China Sunday officially opened its biggest nuclear power station, amid renewed safety concerns 20 kilometres away in Hong Kong. Premier Li Peng, currently on a tour of southern China, was among the 1,000 dignitaries on hand for the inauguration of the Daya Bay Power Plant, Radio Television Hong Kong reported. Built with French and British technology, Daya Bay — a joint venture between China and Hong Kong investors — is to sell 70 per cent of its output to the British colony, which reverts to China in 1997. Concern about its safety — first voiced in 1986 after the Chernobyl disaster — resurfaced Sunday as a Hong Kong politician asked to know how complete local emergency plans were for responding to a radiation leak.

Polish left-wing cabinet in crisis

Sports

Tomba takes charge in World Cup slalom

GARMISCH-PARTENKIRCHEN, Germany (R) — Alberto Tomba seized control of a World Cup slalom Sunday with a masterly first-leg run as ski racing returned to Garmisch-Partenkirchen for the first time since the death of Ulrike Maier.

The Italian, who collected his third slalom victory of the season in Chamonix last Sunday, looked set for his fourth after thoroughly dominating proceedings in the opening skirmish.

The slalom was the lone man's race at this meeting after a downhill planned for Saturday was called off for safety reasons in the wake of former world champion Maier's death in downhill the previous Saturday.

Tomba, the number one starter, clocked 45.95 seconds on the 58-gate Gudiberg

course, a different slope from the one on which Maier had her fatal accident.

Finn-Christer Jagge, who beat Tomba for his 1992 Olympic slalom title, was second-fastest home in 46.16 but hooked a gate on the way down and was ruled out for the second leg.

Fellow Norwegian Kjetil Andre Aamodt, reigning slalom world champion, failed to finish, while overall World Cup champion Marc Girardelli of Luxembourg continued his wretched slalom run with a first-leg time nearly three seconds behind Tomba.

Sweden's Tomas Fogdor, second to Tomba in Chamonix, was the only racer with a valid time within a second of the Italian, clocking 46.67.

Austria's Thomas Stangsinger, winner of two World Cup slaloms this season, was next-fastest in 47.04.

German Gerg wins super-G; Schneider takes overall lead

SIERRA NEVADA, Spain (AP) — German 18-year-old Hilde Gerg grabbed her first World Cup win Sunday in the super-G, and Swiss Vreni Schneider finished 13th to pick up enough points to take the lead in the overall World Cup standings from season-long rival Pernilla Viberg of Sweden.

The 13th place finish gave Schneider 20 points and an overall total of 1,210 points — a mere point ahead Viberg with 1,209. Viberg skied but did not earn points in the super-G, which closed Spain's World Cup.

The youngest member of the German women's ski team and one of the team's coming stars, Gerg said she was shocked by her victory. She won in a time

of 1:47.80, nipping Italian 18-year-old Isolde Kostner in second in 1:48.30. Gerg's roommate Katharina Gutensohn of Germany was third in 1:48.91.

Gerg was the fourth different winner in four super-G races this season.

"I can't believe it, I can't believe it," said Gerg, whose previous best in any World Cup race was a sixth place finish in super-G in Cortina D'Ampezzo, Italy, last month.

"I guess I wasn't too bad."

"I had a good feeling because it was a nice day but I never dreamed I'd win," added Gerg, who is in her first full season on the circuit and suffered a foot injury just before the season started.

Rosset wins Marseille Open

MARSEILLE, France (AFP) — Switzerland's Marc Rosset overpowered Frenchman Arnaud Boetsch 7-6 (8/6), 7-6 (7/4) to win the ATP tennis tournament here for the second year running Sunday.

Rosset, the Olympic champion in Barcelona, notched his seventh ATP tournament victory, while battling Boetsch was left to regret his performance at the crucial points.

The lanky Swiss signalled his intentions in the very first game, blasting down two aces — one of them on a second service. His fine serves were Rosset's major weapon, and

the Frenchman was always struggling to cope.

In the first tie-break, Boetsch sent a forehand too long and weathered three set points before finally handing Rosset the set with a double fault.

But he refused to give up, and broke Rosset for the first time in the second set with a superb passing shot, only to lose his own service for 3-3.

France's number two player had his chance to level the game as he led 6-5. But instead went into a tie-break where Rosset proved yet again to be the stronger of the two.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANIAH HIRSCH
©1993 Movie Masters Inc.

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♦Q7 ♣AK54 ♠A432 Partner opens the bidding with four spades. What action do you take?
A.—Our spade suit, especially the 100 honors, is appealing. However, that doesn't mean we're prepared to give up on the possibility of a 4-4, or better, fit in hearts. Therefore, we should be merely a question of whether partner has an ace. Blackwood will provide the answer. Bid four no trump. As long as partner shows one, six hearts is unlikely to depend on more than a finesse.

Q.2—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦A105 ♣10983 994 ♠Q963 Partner opens the bidding with one spade. What do you respond?
A.—With six high-card points including an ace, it's your duty to respond. It's a matter of whether you should raise to two spades or bid one no trump. With three-card support and a ruffing value, we prefer the single raise.

Q.3—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦K94 ♣A53 ♣A83 ♠J865 What is your opening bid?
A.—Sorry if we trapped you with this one, but we don't consider this an opening bid despite the 2 1/2 suit trick. Our long suit is the Queen of the four, a bid of one spade is no last-ditch effort and it will be difficult to control the later auction. Pass.

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦AKQ103 ♣A742 ♠K5 ♠Q8 What is your opening bid?
A.—Sorry if we trapped you with this one, but we don't consider this an opening bid despite the 2 1/2 suit trick. Our long suit is the Queen of the four, a bid of one spade is no last-ditch effort and it will be difficult to control the later auction. Pass.

Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with a weak two diamonds. What action do you take?

A.—At this point, your partner must surely have a self-sufficient suit to preempt at the four-level. So slam should be merely a question of whether partner has an ace. Blackwood will provide the answer. Bid four no trump. As long as partner shows one, six hearts is unlikely to depend on more than a finesse.

Q.5—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦QJ67 ♣Q94 ♠Q762 ♠A86 The bidding has proceeded: North East South West 1 0 1 0 ? What action do you take?

A.—There are three choices, each of which will have some adherents. The two we like least are one no trump (the hand isn't strong enough) and pass (we do have five-card support for partner's suit). That leaves two diamonds as this department's choice.

Q.6—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦EKJ654 ♣Q2 0108 ♠8765 The bidding has proceeded: West North East South 1 0 1 0 ? Pass Pass ? Do you balance?

A.—If you have any excuse at all, don't let the opponents play at the one-level, but that doubleton queen in their suit is a warning. Pass. All too often an ill-advised opening bid will allow the enemy to bounce into game and not necessarily in opener's suit.

Q.7—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦A984 ♣A53 ♣A83 ♠J865 What is your opening bid?

A.—Sorry if we trapped you with this one, but we don't consider this an opening bid despite the 2 1/2 suit trick. Our long suit is the Queen of the four, a bid of one spade is no last-ditch effort and it will be difficult to control the later auction. Pass.

Q.8—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦AKQ103 ♣A742 ♠K5 ♠Q8 What is your opening bid?

A.—Sorry if we trapped you with this one, but we don't consider this an opening bid despite the 2 1/2 suit trick.

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Special show for children on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays at 11 a.m.

Bugs Bunny Film

U.S. beset by double woes before Lillehammer Games

LILLEHAMMER (R) — The U.S. squad, beset by tragedy and controversy before the Olympics start, drew some comfort Sunday from the news skater Elizabeth Punsalan wants to honour her murdered father by competing at the Olympics despite the tragedy.

"My father was proud of my skating achievements and would have wanted me to go to Lillehammer," she said.

"I will try to skate in memory."

Condron said the media attention on both the Punsalan and Harding stories had been intense for the U.S. skating team.

"It's been incredible," he said. "Those people are operating on not much sleep and a whole lot of patience. They just try to do the best they can in a situation that doesn't come up once in a lifetime."

American skating has had more than its share of tragedy down the years.

Millions shared the agony when speed skater Dan Jansen set off in the 500 metres at the 1988 Calgary Games just hours after learning his sister had died of leukemia. He

crashed on the first bend. He also fell in the 1,000 metres.

This time, he looks likely to put that and a disappointing performance in the 1992 Albertville Games behind him and bag two or even three gold medals.

Conditions at the speed skating rink at Hamar, 50 kilometres south of Lillehammer, are almost universally judged excellent and world records are likely.

Outside, the temperature hovers around -13 Celsius and light snow overnight added to the work of Lillehammer road clearers. Snow on the rooftops is about a metre deep.

The flow of athletes and delegations arriving is beginning to increase.

Jamaica, Liechtenstein and Sweden are due at Lillehammer on Sunday to join 33 delegations already installed at the site. Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic, and New Zealand will take part in the first flag-raising ceremony there.

On Monday, Lillehammer organisers will start broadcasting news in four languages and music on a special Olympic radio station.

Graf sweeps past Navratilova, captures Pan Pacific title

TOKYO (R) — Top seed Steffi Graf swept aside defending champion Martina Navratilova Sunday to win the \$750,000 Toray Pan Pacific Open.

The world number one, fresh from the victory in last week's Australian Open which gave her a non-calendar year Grand Slam, outplayed the veteran Czech-born American 6-2 6-4 on the fast carpet surface at the Tokyo metropolitan gymnasium.

"I served well and kept her from coming in," an elated Graf said. "If you get a short ball against her you've got to come in before her or else she'll come in. So I forced her to play long and she made more errors."

The flow of athletes and delegations arriving is beginning to increase.

Jamaica, Liechtenstein and Sweden are due at Lillehammer on Sunday to join 33 delegations already installed at the site. Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic, and New Zealand will take part in the first flag-raising ceremony there.

"She didn't play as well as she did last year," said Graf, who has not dropped a single set on the way to winning her first two tournaments of 1994.

"Today didn't go as well as I'd have liked," said Navratilova, the 37-year-old world number three. "I made some errors I normally wouldn't have made, but I attribute that to Steffi putting on a lot of pressure."

The American failed to capitalise on three break points in the first set, hitting short balls which allowed Graf to storm the net and hold serve and break her in the fifth and seventh games.

"Once she got rolling, I had a hard time trying to catch up," said Navratilova. Graf achieved an 82 per cent success rate with her first serve, clocking up to 168 kilometres per hour.

Sunday's loss deprived second-seeded Navratilova, now in the final season of her 19-year career, of a sentimental title win.



Graf played an aggressive, intense match from the outset, seizing every opportunity to storm the net and whipping sizzling forehand winners past a frequently wrong-footed Navratilova.

The second set followed a similar pattern. Graf converted her only break point in the fifth game and never looked back. She won her last service game to love.

It was Graf's second destruction in eight days of one of her closest challengers for world supremacy in the absence of Monica Seles.

She routed Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, currently ranked number two, in the Australian Open final in Melbourne.

Sunday's win in Asia's most prestigious women's tournament earned the 24-year-old multi-millionaire a cheque for \$150,000.

"I hope this won't be the last time I play Steffi," Navratilova told the sell-out crowd. "It's always a pleasure to be on the same court as a champion."

Navratilova had little time to mull her disappointment.

She was back on court almost immediately, teaming up with Marion Bolegraf of the Netherlands against her old American doubles partner Pam Shriver and Australia's Elizabeth Smylie.

Navratilova and Bolegraf bowed out to the third seeds 3-6 6-3 6-7.

Sampdoria go on 6-goal rampage

MILAN, Italy (AFP) — Sampdoria went on a six-goal rampage against Udinese Sunday to turn the heat on Italian leaders AC Milan.

Sampdoria won 6-2 in a home triumph that took them to 30 points. Two behind Milan, who were playing a late evening game at AS Roma.

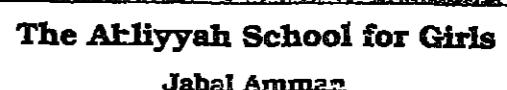
"We feel it's our duty to continue. We knew it would be difficult. What happened yesterday in a horrifying way illustrates it."

He refused to accept the attack was planned to coincide with the renewed appeal for an Olympic truce.

"It seems it could have missed its target. We don't think there is any provocation linked with the Olympic movement," he said.

"We feel it's our duty to continue. We knew it would be difficult. What happened yesterday in a horrifying way illustrates it."

Roberto Mancini made it



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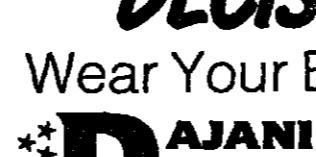
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Brunei sultan ends Iran visit

TEHRAN (R) — The sultan of Brunei, Hassan Al Bolkiah, ended a visit to Iran on Sunday as the two countries called for more bilateral trade and for lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia's Muslims. The sultan told reporters at the airport that his four-day trip to Iran had been "successful" and said he was "very satisfied" with his talks, Tehran Radio said. Iranian President Ayatollah Khomeini Rafsanjani, accompanying the sultan to the airport, said the two countries had learned of their potential for future cooperation and the president planned a visit to Brunei. The two countries issued a joint statement calling for cooperation in economic, trade, cultural and scientific fields. The visit has "opened a new chapter in relations" between Iran and Brunei and could lead to further trade between the two countries and joint investments, the statement said.

Ruling party wins Mauritania local polls

NOUAKCHOTT (R) — Mauritania's ruling party has shrugged aside its first poll challenge by the opposition, taking the vast majority of seats in local government elections. An Interior Ministry statement broadcast on state radio Saturday night said President Maouya Ould Sidahmed Taya's Republican Democratic and Social Party took a majority of the 11 districts contested in the day's second-round voting, capping its Jan. 31 first-round landslide in 163 of 197 districts. It did not give a breakdown of the second-round results. Neither the main opposition Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) nor the smaller Union for Democracy and Progress (UDP) ran in the West African country's first multi-party presidential election in January 1992 or parliamentary polls in March the same year. Mr. Ould Taya, who took power in a 1984 army coup, won a six-year term in the 1992 election which the opposition said was rigged.

Kurdish politician shot in Turkey

ISTANBUL (R) — Unidentified gunmen shot and slightly wounded a leading Kurdish politician in the Turkish capital Ankara early Sunday, Kanal 6 television reported. Quoting security officials, Kanal 6 said Murat Bozak, secretary general of the pro-Kurdish Democracy Party (DEP), was hit by two bullets when he opened the door to his house to unknown visitors in suburban Kocaeli after midnight. Police said the assailants fled. Hospital officials said Mr. Bozak was in good condition and recovering from his wounds. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. Kurdish newspaper editors said attacks had bombed two suburban DEP buildings and offices of several Kurdish businessmen in Ankara in the past month. DEP holds 18 seats in Turkey's 450-member national assembly and is the sixth biggest political grouping. Guerrillas of the banned Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) are waging a separatist war in southeast Turkey. More than 10,000 people have been killed in the conflict since 1984.

Chief Israeli rabbi may meet Castro

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau said he may meet Cuban President Fidel Castro during a two-day visit to Cuba starting Sunday. "From one source I have such a surprising message that when the man (Castro) heard an Israeli chief rabbi was interested in coming to the island... he expressed his wish to come to me to meet face-to-face and talk," Mr. Lau told Israel Radio on Sunday by telephone from the United States. Cuba has no formal ties with Israel. Mr. Lau said a main purpose of his trip was to visit the remnants of Cuba's Jewish community, which has dwindled from 12,000 to 1,000 because of emigration and assimilation since Mr. Castro's 1959 revolution.

'Jewish' bananas spark row in Egypt's parliament

CAIRO (AFP) — Deputies had to restrain a colleague as he tried to thump another deputy who called the ruling party "Jews" for praising Israel's help in growing Egyptian bananas and apples, newspapers reported Sunday. The row broke out as Agriculture Minister Yusef Wali, vice chairman of the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP), said Saturday his sector had benefited from Israeli know-how and technology. Nasserite opposition deputy Diadeddin Daud argued, however, that cooperation with Israel had only led to lower production levels, charging that Israeli insecticides were damaging Egyptian crops. Mr. Wali caused an uproar in opposition ranks by counteracting that "the improvement in the quality of bananas and apples is thanks to our cooperation with Israel." An independent, Tawfiq Zaghloul, attacked NDP members who sided with the minister and called them Jews. An indignant Essam Sultan of the NDP immediately rose to his feet, took off his jacket and squared up to throw a punch at Mr. Zaghloul. But he was restrained by his colleagues. Egypt in 1979 became the first Arab state to make peace with Israel.

Pakistan's illegal opium crop destroyed

ISLAMABAD (R) — Prolonged drought has destroyed most of Pakistan's huge illegal opium crop and Interior Minister Nasrullah Khan Babar thanked God on Sunday for His help. "This was help from God but we will not pray for it to come again because it also destroys other crops," he told a news conference. "But after this we will take other measures to eliminate the poppy." The drought has destroyed about 80 per cent of the poppy crop from which opium is produced in the semi-autonomous North West Frontier tribal region bordering Afghanistan. Mr. Babar said, Heroin, derived from the opium with simple equipment known locally as "bathtub factories," flooded Western markets in the 1980s, with the Afghan-Pakistan border area eclipsing traditional supplies from the Golden Triangle in South-East Asia. The minister gave no estimate of this year's opium production, which he said was about 180 tonnes last year compared with a peak of 800 tonnes when Pakistan became a major source of heroin smuggled to Western countries.

4 soldiers hurt in IRA attack

BELFAST (AP) — Four soldiers were hospitalised after an IRA mortar hit their patrol vehicle early Sunday. Three soldiers were hit by shrapnel, but their wounds are not life threatening, police said. A fourth was treated for shock. The mortar was hidden in bushes on the outskirts of West Belfast and triggered by remote control. "It is a type of weapon the IRA has used in previous attacks," a police spokesman said, requesting customary anonymity. Irish Republican Army (IRA) has frequently targeted soldiers and police in its violent campaign to end British rule in Northern Ireland.

1950s H-bomb fallout sent to U.K.

LONDON (R) — The British government smuggled radioactive debris from hydrogen bomb tests in the 1950s back to London in diplomatic bags carried on ordinary passenger airlines, the Observer newspaper said Sunday. Citing what it said were newly-released official papers, the Observer said that debris from the early nuclear tests on Christmas Island in the Pacific was secreted, loaded onto scheduled flights on Australia's Qantas Airline. The dust was examined at Britain's top secret atomic weapons research establishment at Aldermaston. Military flights had been abandoned because of the costs involved, the Observer said. The newspaper said that although the H-bomb dust was sealed in cans, placed in polythene bags and loaded into lead-lined boxes before being despatched under diplomatic cover, it was impossible to know whether innocent Qantas passengers and crew were exposed to radiation. However it said the courier who accompanied the first diplomatic bag from Christmas Island in 1957 died from two different types of cancer in 1991.

Gulf Muslims angry over Sarajevo deaths

DUBAI (Agencies) — Gulf Muslims reacted in anger on Sunday to the killing of 66 Bosnian Muslims in a mortar attack in Sarajevo and demanded immediate action by Islamic countries to help co-religionists in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Newspapers in Gulf Arab states, which have donated millions of dollars to Bosnian Muslims, said the world's reluctance to end the plight of Bosnian Muslims was a conspiracy against Islam.

Film of the devastation in a Sarajevo market where mortars, presumably Serbian, killed 66 people on Saturday were prominently shown on television screens around the region.

A prominent Kuwaiti statesman, Abdul Rahman Al Awadi, wrote in the United Arab Emirates newspaper Al Khaleej: "If the Muslims don't know when we will..."

He said Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic "has clearly said and in a loud voice we don't want money we want weapons to defend ourselves but despite all the statements... and meetings... we have not seen anything."

He attacked the 51-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which is spearheading Muslim efforts to support Bosnian Muslims. "It is as if the OIC was only formed to hold meetings and spend millions on the meetings," Mr. Awadi said.

His comments reflect rising anger at the failure of Islamic states to provide effective help to fellow Muslims in Bosnia-



A morgue attendant checks one of the bodies laid out at a Sarajevo hospital late Saturday after

a shell landed in the city's crowded marketplace, killing at least 66 people (AFP photo)

Herzegovina. Muslim states have been donating money and relief aid, but none have so far officially responded to Bosnian Muslim appeals for military help.

Diplomats say the Muslim man-in-the-street was increasingly frustrated at the West's failure to support Bosnia's Muslims, but Islamic governments were unwilling to take any action outside the international consensus.

The Bosnian president appealed to the world on Saturday to rescue Bosnia's Muslims or become an accomplice in war crimes. He urged Muslim states, Russia and the heads of the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the

European Union to intervene against Serbs in Bosnia or lift the arms embargo on its Muslim forces.

In the Saudi capital Riyadh, more than 15 million Saudi riyals (\$4 million) in donations to Bosnian Muslims were collected on Saturday, the first day of a week-long drive to raise funds.

The Saudi Press agency quoted Prince Satam Ben Abdul Aziz, vice president of a special committee on Bosnia, as urging Saudis to donate more to their fellow Muslims "so they can face their enemies and restore their usurped rights."

The Saudi Al Jazeera newspaper attacked the U.N. Security Council saying that its

resolutions were ineffective. Qatar's Al Sharq newspaper said the world community, by limiting itself to statements of condemnation, "has encouraged the Serb aggressors to continue their barbaric actions."

The United Nations has proved its total incompetence to do anything to restore the rights to their owners... listening to all the condemnation statements is making the honourable people feel sick and desperate," it said.

Qatar's Al Arab daily said: "What is happening is a conspiracy against Islam and the more the Islamic World keeps silent the more it will help the killing and annihilation of Muslims."

Israeli health minister resigns

TEL AVIV (AP) — Health Minister Haim Ramon resigned Sunday after Labour Party apparatchiks blocked his attempt to reform Israel's health system.

"I told the cabinet that I can no longer take responsibility for the health system," Mr. Ramon said on Israel Radio. The resignation, made in writing and read out by Mr. Ramon at the weekly cabinet session, goes into effect Tuesday.

Mr. Ramon's proposal, similar to that being drawn up by the Clinton administration, aimed at guaranteeing citizens basic medical services regardless of income or employment status.

"I am obligated to the voter, to the public and to myself," Mr. Ramon said. "If I did not do what I did today I would find it very hard to live with myself."

The media has speculated that Mr. Ramon will be offered a different portfolio in the cabinet, but the outgoing minister said he had been given no assurances and could very well remain only a legislator in parliament.

Mr. Ramon's proposal was presented in parliament as a health insurance bill that easily passed the first of the three needed votes. Last week the cabinet withdrew the proposal after the ruling Labour Party came under fire from the Histadrut trade union.

Histadrut, which represents 60 per cent of the two million member work force, owns Kupat Holim Clalit, the country's largest health plan that relies on government handouts to stay afloat. Most of Histadrut's officials are members of the Labour Party.

Mr. Ramon's plan, that would require Israelis to pay a health tax of 4.8 per cent of their income, would have cut subsidies to the Kupat Holim and undercut the Histadrut, jeopardising them both.

Israelis presently pay a similar amount, an average of about \$650 annually, to various health funds that run clinics and fund hospitalisation in some cases. But the funds are not required to accept all applicants and an estimated 350,000 Israelis are uninsured.

The demise of the health bill was seen as a personal defeat for Mr. Ramon, a leader of Labour's free market oriented young guard, and a set back for efforts to reform still dominant socialist holdovers from Zionism's early days, such as the Histadrut.

COLUMN

Doctor ordered to pay \$5,000 over prank

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A surgeon was ordered to pay a nurse \$5,000 for shooting a surgical staple into her buttocks as she stooped to collect sponges on an operating room floor. Lola Simpson said she was less interested in the just award than in bringing Dr. James Bennett to task for the 1990 incident at Children's Hospital. She said Dr. Bennett called the incident a "joke," but he could have spread infection from the patient to her. Dr. Bennett had just finished stapling the hip of a boy being prepared for surgery when Nurse Simpson bent down to count sponges. Dr. Bennett turned the stapling gun on her.

"There was a nice muscular man standing next to him in the operation room, but he didn't think to do that to him," Nurse Simpson said. Dr. Bennett's attorney said the surgeon may appeal the judgment.

Search expands for stolen icon

ROME (AP) — Missing: One wooden statue of infant Jesus, 600 years old, suspects: None. More than 100 officers from a special art theft squad are turning Rome inside out looking for the stolen icon, believed miraculous by countless numbers of worshippers over the centuries. There have been no good clues, only sobs and prayers at the scene of the crime: A hilltop church where the beloved statue was kept before it disappeared late Tuesday. "I feel like I lost my own son," Moaned Francesco Ricci Saturday, stroking the base of the gilded case where the Bambinello, or little baby, rested.

Every year, tens of thousands of people visit the small side chapel in the Roman Catholic Church of St. Mary's in Aracoeli to view the jewel-covered statue, carved from an olive tree in the Garden of Gethsemane in Jerusalem.

Letters to the Bambinello surround its case. The two-foot (60-centimetre) medieval icon

is especially dear to new mothers, who bring their infants to the statue for a blessing of good health. Rome Mayor Francesco Rutelli called the theft "an insult to the heart of Rome."

Teen murders grandparents over beer dispute

RIO RANCHO, NM (R) — A 16-year-old New Mexico boy and two of his friends were being held after confessing to the stabbing deaths of the boy's 80-year-old grandparents in a dispute over beer.

Police said Saturday the boy, Ed Marie Brown, and his friend, Michael Brown, both 16, killed his grandfather, Robert

and grandmother, Francesca Ricci, in their home.

Ed and Michael Brown were held without bond on charges of first-degree murder.

Both boys are accused of killing their grandparents in a dispute over beer.

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